

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A rotary clutch device, comprising:

a tooth-partially-lacking gear that can mesh with a drive gear and is given initial rotation force;

a rotatable cam body that is concentric with the tooth-partially-lacking gear, having an engagement step, the rotatable cam body separated from the tooth-partially-lacking gear in a radial direction so as to form a space therebetween; and

an elastic body;

wherein an engagement lever is engaged with and disengaged from the engagement step according to an intermittent operation of an actuator so that the tooth-partially-lacking gear starts and stops to rotate; and

rotation force of the tooth-partially-lacking gear is transmitted to the cam body via the elastic body.

2. (Original) The rotary clutch device according to claim 1,

wherein the cam body includes a first support portion;

the tooth-partially-lacking gear includes a second support portion;

the first support portion and the second support portion are provided on confronting side surfaces of the cam body and the tooth-partially-lacking gear, respectively, so as to be opposed to each other in a rotation direction; and

both ends of the elastic body are supported by the first support portion and the second support portion.

3. (Original) The rotary clutch device according to claim 1,

wherein the cam body includes a first contact portion;

the tooth-partially-lacking gear includes a second contact portion;

the first contact portion and the second contact portion are provided on confronting side surfaces of the cam body and the tooth-partially-lacking gear, respectively, so as to be opposed to each other in a rotation direction; and

a flat elastic body is fixed to at least one of the first contact portion and the second contact portion.

4. (Currently Amended) The rotary clutch device according to claim 3, wherein the first and second contact portions are formed so as to be long in a the radial direction of the cam body and the tooth-partially-lacking gear; and the elastic body is provided on at least one of confronting faces of the first and second contact portions.

5. (Currently Amended) A sheet feeder, comprising:
a sheet stacking unit in which sheets are stacked;
a sheet feed roller that sends out a sheet supplied from the sheet stacking unit;

and

a rotary clutch device;
wherein the sheet feed roller is driven by a drive gear via the rotary clutch device;

the rotary clutch device includes: a tooth-partially-lacking gear that can mesh with the drive gear and is given initial rotation force, a rotatable cam body that is concentric with the tooth-partially-lacking gear, having an engagement step, an engagement lever and an elastic body, the rotatable cam body separated from the tooth-partially-lacking gear in a radial direction so as to form a space therebetween;

the engagement lever is engaged with and disengaged from the engagement step according to an intermittent operation of an actuator so that the tooth-partially-lacking gear starts and stops to rotate; and

rotation force of the tooth-partially-lacking gear is transmitted to the cam body via the elastic body.

6. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus, comprising:
a sheet stacking unit in which sheets are stacked;
a sheet feed roller that sends out a sheet supplied from the sheet stacking unit;
an image forming unit that forms an image on a sheet that is sent by the sheet
feed roller; and

a rotary clutch device;
wherein the sheet feed roller is driven by a drive gear via the rotary clutch
device;

the rotary clutch device includes: a tooth-partially-lacking gear that can mesh
with the drive gear and is given initial rotation force, a rotatable cam body that is concentric
with the tooth-partially-lacking gear, having an engagement step, an engagement lever and an
elastic body, the rotatable cam body separated from the tooth-partially-lacking gear in a radial
direction so as to form a space therebetween;

the engagement lever is engaged with and disengaged from the engagement
step according to an intermittent operation of an actuator so that the tooth-partially-lacking
gear starts and stops to rotate; and

rotation force of the tooth-partially-lacking gear is transmitted to the cam body
via the elastic body.

7. (Currently Amended) A rotary clutch device, comprising:

a first rotating body with which a rotating force is supplied by a driving
source;

a second rotating body disposed concentrically with the first rotating body, the
second rotating body with which the rotating force is supplied by the first rotating body;
an engagement portion being engageable with the second rotating body to
restrict rotation thereof; and

an elastic body disposed between the first rotating body and the second rotating body to transmit the rotating force from the first rotating body to the second rotating body;

wherein the second rotating body is smaller in diameter than the first rotating body; and

wherein the elastic body is compressed when the engagement portion restricts the rotation of the second rotating body.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Original) A rotary clutch device, comprising:

a first rotating body with which a rotating force is supplied from a driving source;

a second rotating body with which the rotating force is supplied by the first rotating body;

an engagement portion being engageable with the second rotating body to restrict rotation thereof periodically; and

an impact absorber disposed between the first rotating body and the second rotating body to absorb an impact that occurs when the engagement portion is engaged with the second rotating body.